

# Glyphosate

The City of Port Phillip uses glyphosate as part of a balanced weed management strategy to maintain safe and attractive public spaces, while also minimising its use through alternative methods. Council ensures herbicide application is safe, regulated, and excluded from sensitive areas.

Following the decision to cease using glyphosate in 2018, weed control became less effective and a growing number of residents pushed for better ways to control weeds. In response to this, on 5 July 2023, Council approved the use of glyphosate to manage weeds in low-risk areas.

## What is glyphosate?

The City of Port Phillip uses a glyphosate-based herbicide (Roundup Biactive) that has been specifically formulated for use in environmentally sensitive areas, for control of a broad spectrum of annual, perennial and aquatic weeds. It is approved for use in areas such as around streams, creeks, dams, channels and drains, and widely used by local councils across Australia in open space areas. The product works by treating the root of the weed which avoids the build-up of seed banks for a more long-lasting result. When dry, it becomes inactive and does not provide residual weed control.

## Why do we use glyphosate?

The use of glyphosate is part of Council's commitment to meeting community expectations for safe, functional, and aesthetically pleasing public spaces, and is the most efficient, cost-effective way of controlling weeds. It has been approved for use by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA), the national regulatory body for agricultural and veterinary chemical products.

## Where is glyphosate used?

Glyphosate is used in low-risk areas including footpaths, including pathways in parks and

reserves, roads, laneways and roadside reserves. It is also considered safe to use around waterways, though not in areas where run-off may immediately enter waterways. We don't spray in high-risk areas such as childcare centres, near playgrounds and picnic areas, community gardens, and in close proximity to members of the public at the time of spraying. We also avoid areas where we can see food is being grown by residents.

## Is glyphosate safe?

Council recognises there is concern around the use of glyphosate following a number of countries and cities banning, or proposing to ban, the product. However, following further research commissioned by Deakin University and the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), the APVMA determined that glyphosate did not pose a carcinogenic or genotoxic risk to humans (APVMA, 2016).

## What alternatives can be used?

Council uses a range of weed control techniques depending on the site, such as hand pulling, slashing, native vegetation planting, mulching, and organic herbicide spraying. We use these methods where possible to minimise the need for glyphosate,

however, glyphosate is the most efficient and cost-effective way to control weeds in low-risk areas.

## How is safe application carried out?

Glyphosate is applied by our contractors who are trained in accordance with manufacturers safety instructions. Spraying equipment is regularly checked and serviced, and all staff undertaking spraying must undertake training.

To notify the public of spraying, “Spraying in Progress” signs are erected, or fixed to any weed control spraying vehicles. The liquid product is applied using a spray applicator to affected areas, and once dry, becomes inactive. At this time, the area sprayed in considered safe to use. Blue dye is added to the liquid so the treated area can be seen.

Our contractors only spray in conditions considered safe, where spray drift is minimal. On windy or rainy days, they may not be able to undertake any spraying. They also undertake practices to minimise spray drift if required.

Our contractors are required to keep records of areas sprayed, including the time and day of spraying, conditions at the time of spraying (wind etc), type and amount of product used, and details of the person spraying.

## What if I come into contact with a treated area?

As per the manufacturer’s instructions, the product we use is diluted to an approved concentration and when dry, no longer poses a risk. However, as with any chemical, if you, your child or pet comes into contact with a sprayed area (wet or dry) we recommend washing the affected area of the body.

## Council’s ‘No Spray’ register

In order to address residents’ concerns of glyphosate use near their property, Council has established a ‘No Spray’ list for residents who want to opt out of weed spraying on the road, footpath, nature strip or laneway outside their property.

By signing up to this list, you take on responsibility for weed control and agree to do so in accordance with Council’s agreed standards.

To add your property to the list, please call out friendly ASSIST team on 03 9209 6777 or log a customer request, providing details of your address and the specific areas you would like us to avoid.

## Further information

For more information on weed control in the City of Port Phillip, [visit our routine maintenance web page](#).

To read the 2023 Council Decision to reintroduce glyphosate, [click here](#). To read the full report, [click here](#).

To read more on glyphosate, please visit the APVMA website: [Glyphosate | Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority](#)